

Megan Davenport Bill 6824 testimony

My name is Megan Davenport and I am here to testify regarding Bill 6824, an act concerning the State budget, and I am requesting that the appropriations committee reallocate the Governor's Budget's proposed increases for school choice programs more equitably to include 7.5 million of those increases for agriscience programs.

I am currently a freshman at Nonnewaug High School and am in the Agriscience program. I was on the varsity volleyball team and was on the junior varsity basketball team and am enrolled in all honors classes. Before coming to Nonnewaug I was already in love with agriculture. I have been in 4H since I was 12 and have been showing cows ever since I was a little kid and have loved it. I currently own 5 dairy cows, Marshmallow, Stefanie, Marley, Sookie, and Sabrina.

Marshmallow who was the first cow I owned and showed on my own back in 2008 when she was 6 months old and I was 8 years old. I love working with cows and love dairy showing. I show my cows at the Goshen Fair in Goshen every Labor Day and have shown at the National Ayrshire Show at the Big E a few times as well. One of my best showing experiences I had was when I was 13. I got the chance to show my cow, Stefanie, at the World Dairy Expo in Madison Wisconsin.

This was an incredible experience and it was very exciting to show among the best of the dairy cows in North America. I came in 8th place, and had an incredible time and was honored to be able to show at the World Dairy Expo. I absolutely loved showing at Madison and hope to someday be able to show there again.

This year I am a student at Nonnewaug High School and am in the Ag program. I absolutely love the Ag program and am so happy I came here. I came to the ag program at Nonnewaug because I want to become a large animal veterinarian when I get older. As a freshman, ag students take 5 different classes throughout the year: FFA, tractor driving, animal science, plant science, and ag mechanics. I enjoy having this variety of classes because I can learn not only about animal science (what I want to learn to become a large animal veterinarian) but also I can learn about plants, mechanics and the history of the FFA. Then as a sophomore you can choose 4 different classes that apply to your ag interests, and as juniors and seniors you can choose 1 main class that you want to learn about that may apply to the ag field you are most interested in. I am also involved with the FFA and I am on the Novice Parliamentary Procedure team and I am trying out for the farm business management team as well. In parliamentary procedure, we learn how to effectively and correctly run meetings. Being on the team is really fun because we get to debate about agriscience topics that affect our Ag program and our FFA chapter.

I absolutely love the agriscience program at Nonnewaug and agriscience programs in general. I am from Litchfield and had to apply to get into Nonnewaug, I was very excited when I received my acceptance letter and couldn't wait for the upcoming school year. Since I came to the agriscience program, I have met many nice kids from other districts and have made many good friends in the short time I've been here. At the 8th grade orientation cookout a few days before the beginning of the school year, I didn't know anyone. But once I sat down, I sat across a girl who is now one of my best friends. I met her just by sitting down at that table and the instant we started talking we became best friends. She is from new Fairfield and wants to be a veterinarian like me. I absolutely love this ag program because I can not only learn about the ag field that interests me, veterinary science, but I have made many good friends and have become very involved in the FFA as well as the school in general. I believe that by increasing the funding for Ag students, many more kids will be able to have this opportunity that I had. By increasing the funding, more kids would be accepted and would be able to have this amazing opportunity. Many kids do not get accepted into the Ag program and may not even pursue the Ag career they were initially interested in because of not getting in. By increasing this funding, more kids would be able to pursue the Ag career they are interested in and if they wish to pursue that Ag career in college and later schooling, they will be able to have the knowledge and skills they acquired in the Ag program. Overall, I love the Agriscience program here at Nonnewaug and in Ag programs in general and hope that, by increasing the Ag funding, more kids will be able to have the opportunity that I have had the honor to have.

In closing, please provide more equity by reallocating these school choice increases and give 7.5 million to our agriscience programs, it is not fair to our students to be forgotten about.